

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9144

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 6447

STADIS//////////

FOR NEA ONLY LANDE FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, AF

SUBJ: MILITARY TRAINCNG

REF: STATE 211627

1. I APPRECIATED REFTEL WITH BACKGROUND ON DEPARTMENT AND CINCPAC VIEWS ON THE NEW LEGISLATION AFFECTING OUR MILITARY TRAINING PROGRAMS. WE HAVE GIVEN CONSIDERABLE THOUGHT HERE AS TO HOW THE PROGRAM COULD MOST EFFECTIVELY BE ADMINISTERED AFTER THE DATE OF MANDATORY SEPARATION FROM DAO. LET ME SAY AT THE OUTSET THAT EVEN GRANTING THE REASONS WHICH LED CONGRESS TO PASS SUCH LEGISLATION, ITS APPLICATION TO COUNTRIES SUCH AS AFGHANISTAN HAS MORE FORESEEABLE NEGATIVE EFFECTS THAN POSITIVE CONSEQUENCES. FOR ONE THING, IT IMPOSES ON US AN INCREASE IN THE MILITARY PERSONNEL ASSIGNED HERE. SECONDLY, AS THE MANAGER OF THE TRAINING PROGRAM, THE DEFENSE ATTACHE HAS USEFUL ACCESS TO ALL LEVELS OF THE AFGHAN MILITARY WHICH HE WILL LOSE UNDER THE NEW ARRANGEMENT. I HOPE THAT NEA WILL GET TOGETHER WITH PM AND L TO ATTEMPT TO HAVE THE LEGISLATION AMENDED TO GIVE US THE OPTION OF USING OUR DEFENSE ATTACHE AS OVERALL SUPERVISOR OF PROGRAM. THIS EXCEPTION MIGHT APPLY TO ALL SMALL COUNTRIES. RECEIVING TRAINING, BUT
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NO ARMS OR EQUIPMENT FROM THE U.S.

2. WE HAVE SEEN CINCPAC'S MESSAGE ABOUT USING NEW DELHI AS A REGIONAL BASE FOR ADMINISTERING SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS. WE ARE ANSWERING CINCPAC BY SEPTEL, STATING WE ARE OPPOSED TO SUCH REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION FROM DELHI, ISLAMABAD OR TEHRAN. AFGHAN SUSPICIONS OF ITS NEIGHBORS WOULD PROBABLY TAINT ITS DEALINGS WITH U.S. OFFICERS BASED THERE. MOREOVER THE EMBASSY WOULD LOSE THE ACCESS TO HIGH MILITARY OFFICIALS WHICH, ALONG WITH ALLOWING THE AFGHANS AN ALTERNATIVE TO EXCLUSIVE SOVIET INFLUENCE ON THE MILITARY, HAS LED ME TO ARGUE THE IMPORTTANCE OF THE PROGRAM--AT ITS PRESENT LEVEL OF STUDENTS--TO OVERALL U.S. OBJECTIVES IN AFGHANISTAN.

3. PERIODIC TDY SUPPORT FROM DOD WOULD NOT SERVE OUR INTERESTS HERE AS IT WOULD EFFECTIVELY DENY THE POSSIBILITY OF DEVELOPING LONGER TERM (AND VERY IMPORTANT) PERSONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND SOCIAL CONTACT WITH AFGHAN MILITARY LEADERS. YOUR SUGGESTION THAT IT MIGHT BE HANDLED BY THE POLITICAL SECTION WOULD ESCAPE THIS HAZARD, BUT FALL PREY TO ANOTHER. BASICALLY THE AFGHAN MILITARY WILL NOT LISTEN TO A CIVILIAN WITH THE SAME RESPECT AS TO A MILITARY COUNTERPART. NOR WOULD A POLITICAL OFFICER BE ABLE TO ANSWER THE NUTS AND BOLTS QUESTIONS ABOUT TRAINING COURSES OFFERED IN THE U.S. BESIDES, IF ONE INTENT OF CONGRESS IN THE NEW LEGISLATION IS TO SEPARATE PUBLICLY OUR SECURITY ASSISTANCE (SA) PORGRAM FROM INTELLIGENCE GATHERING AGENCIES, THROWING IT TO THE POLITICAL SECTION--ESPECIALLY IN AFGHANISTAN--WOULD HAVE THE OPPOSITE EFFECT.

4. THERE REMAINS ANOTHER POSSIBILITY THAT NEITHER CINCPAC, NOR PM, NOR YOU HAVE SUGGESTED: SEPARATING THE SA PROGRAM FROM DAO HERE AND ESTABLISHING A SEPARATE OFFICE TO MAINTAIN IT. THIS WOULD INVOLVE THE POSTING OF ONE LT. COLONEL AND ONE ENLISTED MAN FOR CLERICAL SUPPORT. AS THE ATTACHE OFFICE WOULD LOSE THE SLOT FOR THE ENLISTED

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MAN NOW PROVIDING SUCH SUPPORT FOR MAP ACTIVITIES, THE NET INCREASE FOR THE MISSION WOULD BE ONLY ONE OFFICER POSITION. HOWEVER SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT SEEMS CUMBERSOME TO US. NEVERTHELESS IF OUR PROPOSAL IN PARA ONE IS NOT FEASIBLE, ESTABLISHING A TWO-MAN DOD OFFICE WOULDS SERVE U.S. INTERSTS IN AFGHANISTAN BETTER THAN OTHER ALTERNATIVES SUGGESTED TO DATE.

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